

STUDIES IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS



BOSTON COLLEGE

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Jesuit Education and Jesuit Spirituality

Arthur F. McGovern, S.J.

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SEPTEMBER 1988

THE SEMINAR ON JESUIT SPIRITUALITY

A group of Jesuits appointed from their provinces in the United States.

The Seminar studies topics pertaining to the spiritual doctrine and practice of Jesuits, especially American Jesuits, and communicates the results to the members of the provinces. This is done in the spirit of Vatican II's recommendation to religious institutes to recapture the original inspiration of their founders and to adapt it to the circumstances of modern times. The Seminar welcomes reactions or comments in regard to the material which it publishes.

The Seminar focuses its direct attention on the life and work of the Jesuits of the United States. The issues treated may be common also to Jesuits of other regions, to other priests, religious, laity, men and/or women. Hence the Studies, while meant especially for American Jesuits, are not exclusively for them. Others who may find them helpful are cordially welcome to read them.

CURRENT MEMBERS OF THE SEMINAR

L. Patrick Carroll, S.J., is pastor of St. Leo's Parish in Tacoma, Washington and superior of the Jesuit community there.

John A. Coleman, S.J., teaches Christian social ethics at the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley.

Robert N. Doran, S.J., is one of the editors of the complete works of Bernard Lonergan and teacher of systematic theology at Regis College, the Jesuit School of Theology in Toronto.

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John W. Padberg, S.J., is chairman of the Seminar, editor of *Studies*, and director and editor at the Institute of Jesuit Sources.

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Arthur F. McGovern, S.J.

JESUIT EDUCATION
AND JESUIT SPIRITUALITY

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For Your Information . . .

You will notice four new names on the inside front cover of this issue of *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*. L. Patrick Carroll, Robert M. Doran, David J. Hassel and David S. Toolan have just joined the Seminar on Jesuit Spirituality. In the November issue of *Studies* I shall tell you more about these new members.

This occasion of new membership is a good time to tell briefly how someone does become a member of the Seminar for the usual three-year term. As our inside front cover notes, this is "a group of Jesuits appointed from their provinces in the United States." Who appoints them? The ten provincials acting in their capacity as the Jesuit Conference Board do so. How do they come up with the names? For the three new members to be appointed every year (this year, exceptionally, four new members), the Seminar sends to the provincials a list of twelve suggestions. Where does the Seminar get the names on that list? First, the present members receive every year an updated "long list" of prospective members, the names of more than 250 names of Jesuits in the ten provinces of the United States, compiled by the Seminar office and including suggestions from the present members of the Seminar. At our January meeting we discuss and reduce those possibilities to a shorter list of forty names and again consider those forty in the light of the purposes of the Seminar (set forth on the inside front cover of *Studies*). At the next meeting, we arrive at a "short list" of twelve names and then or at the subsequent meeting we rank those twelve by preferential ballot and send the suggestions to the Jesuit Conference which makes the choice of those invited to membership. Sometimes, of course, a person invited cannot take the position because of other responsibilities. But the Seminar has been very fortunate in the generous acceptance by some sixty American Jesuits over almost twenty years.

Our next issue of *Studies* will treat a subject about which each of us is tempted to consider himself an expert, since each of us has experienced it, *Jesuit formation*. It is also a subject which because of the many changes of the last twenty or so years occasions strong opinions *today*. The italicized words above are the title of the essay, "Jesuit Formation Today." Its subtitle, "An Invitation to Dialogue and Involvement," will, I hope, bring responses to the invitation. Its author, William A. Barry, S.J., is presently rector at Boston College.

John W. Padberg, S.J.

Editor

Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits

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JESUIT EDUCATION AND JESUIT SPIRITUALITY

Arthur F. McGovern, S.J.*

INTRODUCTION: CHOOSING LIFE

“See, today I set before you life and prosperity, death and disaster . . . ; choose life, then, so that you and your descendants may live” (Dt 30:15-19). This scripture quotation, the first reading for the feast of St. Ignatius, poses a critical challenge for my own spiritual life. The thought of physical death has not yet come to haunt me, but the thought of spiritual death does concern me. I have come to recognize, and tried to confront, the potential causes of such death for me: loss of prayer and of rootedness in Christ, letting pressures overwhelm me, giving in to discouragement and depression. I realize as well where I can and must find life—through gaining perspective in prayer, finding time to treasure the blessings in my life, letting the power and spirit of Christ fill me, giving and receiving from others, especially within the Society.

The Society of Jesus faces similar choices which may determine the continued vitality of our apostolic works. We need to confront some sobering realities and discern how we can truly choose life. Our numbers continue to diminish. Nearly half of my teachers in college, at Georgetown, were Jesuits. Now we constitute a small

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minority, less than 4% of the total faculty and administration working at our Jesuit universities. Twenty years ago I represented the median age (38) for the Detroit Province; twenty years later I still represent the median age (58). The problem, however, does not involve numbers alone. The schools of decades past had a strong Jesuit identity. Jesuits did much, if not most, of the teaching. They determined the curriculum and set the tone of the schools, with required attendance at Mass, annual retreats, and rules governing dress and behavior. Jesuits also presented a very unified front in their views of theology and philosophy. Those days have gone and will never return.

The threat of dying can take various forms. In recent decades manpower shortages have led to the closing of some Jesuit high schools. Declining numbers of retreatants could bring an end to some retreat houses. At my own University of Detroit, financial distress and declining enrollment have threatened the very continuance of the university. We have, however, found some new ways of "choosing life" and I would like to share these later in the essay. Jesuits at other institutions may experience the dangers of death in quite different ways: dissension in the community over goals and policies; feeling burned out from trying to cover work once done by much large numbers of Jesuits; feelings of alienation or powerlessness in institutions that seem no longer "ours." Whatever the problems, the challenge of choosing life or death confronts us.

In June 1989, the Society in the United States plans a national assembly for Jesuits working in higher education. I am hoping that this paper may serve at least indirectly as part of the preparation for that meeting since it deals with some personal reflections about Jesuit education, followed by an effort to outline some "characteristics" of Jesuit education, the spirituality that inspires us, and some elements I feel will be needed to make our efforts truly vital in the future. Father Kولvenbach sees greater Jesuit-lay collaboration as essential to our future, but we will need a clear sense of what "Jesuit education" stands for in order to collaborate effectively.

While this essay deals primarily with higher education, I would hope that it will prove of interest and value to all Jesuits whatever their apostolate. Certainly the issue of Jesuit education and Jesuit spirituality touches directly on the high school apostolate; a document by the Jesuit Secondary Education Association served as a primary resource for the characteristics of Jesuit education that I have proposed. More importantly, we are all products of Jesuit education in some form or another. Many studied in Jesuit high schools or universities prior to entry into the Society; all have experienced Jesuit education as part of their formation in the Society.

When I first approached this paper I concerned myself primarily with articulating some distinctive characteristics of Jesuit education and their roots in Ignatian spirituality. This concern had been awokened by my efforts of the past few years to reestablish a core curriculum at the University of Detroit, a core which I hoped would strengthen our "Jesuit identity." I wanted also, however, to share my own experience of a true "resurrection of the spirit" at the University of Detroit after its years of painful struggle for survival. Finally, I thought it might be interesting and fruitful to look back at Jesuit higher education as it operated forty years ago, at the time when I first experienced Jesuit education as a student at Georgetown University.

At first these three interests appeared quite disparate and unrelated. Then I realized that they corresponded to three of the most important graces or "gifts of life" in my own life: the call of vocation at Georgetown, reaffirmation of vocation in tertianship, and the experience of "resurrection" at the University of Detroit. I decided then to use a personal-narrative approach in the first half of the paper, focusing on my own experiences of Jesuit education. I look back at the experiences which most influenced my life as a Jesuit and at some of the changes which have occurred in Jesuit education over the past forty years.

In the second half of the paper I use these personal experiences as an entree to discuss some shared Jesuit concerns about the future

of our educational apostolate. We need, I believe, to work together to define "Jesuit education" and to reaffirm the spirituality which underlies it. So the second part of the paper begins with an effort to define Jesuit education and to relate this to Jesuit spirituality. But the second part of the paper also deals with a new sense of spiritual mission that we may need for our work and heritage to continue.

PART I: GAINING PERSPECTIVE ON PAST EXPERIENCES

College years: the call of Christ

Georgetown University enjoys considerably more prestige today than it did when I arrived there as a freshman in 1947. It impressed *me*, however. I wrote home, after my first month, that I had studied more in those first few weeks than I had during my entire four years of high school. My strongest initial impression of Jesuit education came more, however, through comparing myself with graduates from Jesuit high schools, Gonzaga High School (Washington, D.C.) in particular. I struggled as a freshman; they found first year a breeze. I withdrew from debating, shamed by my inadequacies; they starred.

We followed, except for one's major and some few electives, a very structured curriculum: 26 hours of philosophy, 12 hours of theology, 12 hours each in Latin, history, English and mathematics, in addition to required courses in speech, languages, and the natural sciences. I had no requirements in social sciences, and had no courses in them throughout my studies as a Jesuit either (unless one counts the psychology taught as philosophy). Nearly half of my teachers were Jesuits, including my best and most influential teachers: Father L. C. McHugh, Father Daniel Power, Father Joseph Durkin. They challenged me to think. If some courses nourished my faith, one at least (on nineteenth-century rationalist critics of religion) led me to doubt the existence of God, a doubt that returned painfully and powerfully when I took up philosophy again as a Jesuit scholastic.

Students living in the resident halls found their lives quite structured as well: room checks three times a night for freshmen, lights out at 11:00, check-ins for Mass (on some weekdays as well as on Sunday), annual retreats, expulsion for drinking on campus. The prevailing “fear-of-hell” morality worked effectively. I dated dozens of young women through high school and college years; I never found myself even close to sexual intercourse; even to linger too long on a kiss meant risking eternal damnation.

Initial thoughts about a vocation came first in sophomore year, triggered by reading a best-selling novel of the day, *The Cardinal*. A profoundly inspirational talk a year later, by the Italian Jesuit Father Riccardo Lombardi, gave further stimulus to thoughts about the priesthood. But the real call came through a personal experience that transformed my life. I struggled in my adolescent years with feeling of low self-worth. College had helped me to overcome that through new confidence in my abilities (the golf team, Sodality prefect, student council) and a sense that I could make friends. But I still felt a wrenching incapacity to love; I prayed daily in Dahlgren Chapel at the start of my senior year: “Lord, teach me to love.” The “miracle of grace”—and I did experience it as that—came through a young woman I started to date. She gave me a gift no other person had: she let me *know* that I was loved and it brought to life my own capacity to love. To surrender this new-found love was painful for both of us, but I believed this gift had come through God and that my life should be given, in response, to affirming the worth of others, as she had done for me. (If you are wondering: she married and had five children; we remain close friends.)

I chose the Jesuits primarily for the education they had given me and could further develop. Only later was I able to perceive and acknowledge the love and compassion which I thought, at the time, I would have to learn on my own.

Jesuit university education in this period, at least in liberal arts, mirrored to a considerable extent the education of Jesuits themselves. Even the rules and regulations of campus life contained elements of

Jesuit formation and an underlying assumption that virtue could be inculcated by demanding certain observances (for example, fixed hours of retiring, attendance at Mass). Indeed it did work for me. The rules and strict moral codes kept me out of trouble; required Mass attendance did nourish my faith. Jesuits of that day undoubtedly had their own unique gifts, but the very “structures” of Jesuit education, rather than individual charisms, made Jesuit education a clearly defined institutional apostolate.

My experience of Jesuit education, one that I deeply valued, came within the context of a Jesuit liberal-arts college, where Jesuit identity could be more easily discerned than in schools of business, engineering, law, or medicine. Even in liberal arts, however, significant changes have occurred over the past forty years.

Not wanting to rely on personal experience alone, I paged through back issues of the *Jesuit Educational Quarterly* to get a fuller picture of Jesuit higher education during the period of my college years (1947-1951). The articles from this journal (which ceased publication in the early 1970s) revealed some interesting points about academic priorities in the curriculum. In June 1948, Father Andrew Smith published a study on “The Requirements for the A.B. Degree.” He set forth as an assumption “on which all of us can and do agree,” that “the A.B. degree is our traditional degree, the one about whose fame we ought to be most concerned.”¹ A survey of the twenty-seven Jesuit colleges and universities indicated the following “median” requirements: religion, 8 hours; philosophy, 15-20 hours; Latin, 12-16 hours; modern language, 12 hours; English, 12 hours; history, 12 hours; science, 8 hours; mathematics, 6 hours—requirements roughly equivalent to my own college education.

Three factors in this curriculum drew my attention: the importance given to Latin, the respective roles of theology and philosophy, and the neglect of social sciences and social issues.

1 Andrew C. Smith, S.J., “The Requirements of the A.B. Degree in Jesuit Colleges,” *Jesuit Educational Quarterly (JEQ)*, June 1948, p. 37.

Father Smith himself drew special attention to Latin, as a requirement "probably fated to bear the brunt of any agitation for change." The argument for Latin (and Greek) had been strongly stated in the closing chapter of Father Allan P. Farrell's *The Jesuit Code of Liberal Education*, cited by Smith:

So consistently held since the time of St. Ignatius as to be considered the second principle of the *Ratio* is the conviction that the Latin and Greek classics and Scholastic philosophy are constants in any educational planning, because they offer abiding and universal values for human training. Through close and inspiring contact with classical culture students will have high human standards by which to appraise not only works of art and literature, but also social and political theories and movements.²

If Latin merited a central place for intrinsic reasons, Smith found reference to the tradition of the *Ratio* even more convincing. "We Jesuits, by nature, or perhaps in some cases by grace, are conservative, and we hate to fly in the face of tradition, particularly our educational system, the *Ratio*. It is this very conservatism that has been our strength and our title to the esteem we enjoy."³

In contrast to these statements, Father George Ganss in his *St. Ignatius' Idea of a Jesuit University* (1954) argued that Ignatius made adaptation and change to meet the needs and culture of the day—and not the conservation of a tradition—key principles of Jesuit education. Ganss also claimed that Ignatius and the first Jesuits stressed Latin as fundamental not for its intrinsic merits (and even less as a discipline to train the mind) but because it was the essential tool for understanding and influencing the culture of the sixteenth century.⁴

2 Ibid., p. 39.

3 Ibid.

4 George E. Ganss, S.J., *St. Ignatius' Idea of a Jesuit University* (Milwaukee: Mar-

Philosophy, scholastic philosophy, held the dominant position in Jesuit education of that era. The comparative figures for philosophy (15-20 hours) and theology (8 hours) clearly suggest the greater importance—at least in teaching college students—attributed to philosophy. Theology suffered by comparison in more ways than just required hours. My own college experience of rather weak theology courses—one of them taught by a retired science teacher—found an echo in an article by Father Paul L. O'Connor in the June 1948 issue of the *JEQ*. O'Connor cited a questionnaire sent out to all twenty-seven Jesuit colleges in the country. Only five were satisfied with their religion courses; seventeen said flatly that they were dissatisfied. O'Connor pointed to what he saw as the real core of the problem: “In most of our colleges we are teaching a watered-down version of our own seminary courses in theology simply because it is easier for a busy and perhaps part-time teacher to teach from his own theology notes—which are usually notes based on the theology teacher’s notes taken from a textbook.”⁵ Citing writings by Father John Courtney Murray, O'Connor argued for a true and challenging theology for the lay person.

Father Ganss asserts that St. Ignatius clearly viewed theology as the foremost and indispensable source of the Christian outlook he wished Jesuits and their students to have. “Among all the subjects in the curriculum of his universities, Ignatius rightly gave the place of greatest importance to theology.”⁶ Ignatius also believed, however, that to study theology correctly one needed preparation and certain requisite skills. Consequently, for lay students in secondary

quette University Press, 1954): (1) on the principles of education found in St. Ignatius, pp. 185-192, especially principles 11-13 dealing with timeliness, adaptation to the best education of the day, and meeting contemporary needs; (2) his Appendix I: A Historical Sketch of the Teaching of Latin, pp. 208-248, in which Ganss traces the changing reasons given to justify teaching Latin in later centuries.

⁵ Paul L. O'Connor, S.J., “Religion in the Undergraduate Jesuit Colleges,” *Jesuit Educational Quarterly (JEQ)*, June 1948, p. 43.

⁶ Ganss, *St. Ignatius’ Idea*, p. 54, and the quotation from p. 187.

schools, fairly simple instruction in Christian doctrine suffices. In Jesuit universities of the United States, liberal education tended to mirror the Jesuits' own education; thus college students would take primarily the humanities and scholastic philosophy that "led up to" theology. Biblical studies, moreover, had not yet flowered or been encouraged for lay persons. Philosophy, especially with its systematic and Thomistic orientation toward "man's final end," substituted as an instrument for guiding students and gave them a rational basis for defending their faith.

In recent years Jesuits have stressed the importance of a "faith that does justice." Older alumni from Jesuit universities and high schools often react negatively to current Jesuit involvement in social and political issues. If one can judge from the *Jesuit Educational Quarterly* articles of forty years ago, Jesuit education of that era paid little attention to such issues. Some articles occasionally referred to informing students on public-policy issues or preparing graduates for "participation in the religious, civic, social and political life of the nation."⁷ Education for justice, however, had not yet become a concern. We did have many individual Jesuits who pioneered in social justice work, men like Fathers John LaFarge, Bernard Dempsey, Louis Twomey, Dismas Clark, Dennis Comey, and John Corriden. I found also a strikingly strong statement (1949) by Father General John Baptist Janssens on the need for encouraging students to "hunger and thirst after justice" and for preparing them "to work with the Church in bettering the temporal and spiritual conditions" of all people.⁸ These concerns, however, did not reflect the general ethos of Jesuit education.

One Jesuit writer for the *JEQ*, Father Robert Hartnett, did speak of Jesuit responsibility in helping to shape society "into a more

7 Matthew J. Fitzsimmons, S.J., "Objectives of a Jesuit College," *JEQ*, March 1949, p. 237.

8 Father Janssens' letter on "The Social Apostolate" (1949) cited by Father John W. Donohue, S.J., *Jesuit Education* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1963), p. 209.

just and Christian pattern." Speaking in behalf of the Institute for Social Order, Hartnett argued for more Jesuits to be trained in sociology, economics, and political science. "We would not be in the predicament we are in if we had a few dozen Jesuits in the country who had at least taken summer courses in the social sciences to prepare them for college teaching."⁹ In a later issue of the *JEQ*, Father Hartnett complained that students could go through Jesuit high schools, colleges, and law schools without learning anything about Catholic social principles.¹⁰ Father F. Christian Keeler, concerned about this same point, urged the inclusion of a "sociology" course at the high school level to deal with the papal social encyclicals.¹¹

Even Jesuit educators who recognized the importance of social-political awareness resisted changes that would significantly alter our traditional liberal arts emphasis on the humanities. Father James J. McGinley, while affirming the need for correct social thinking, asserted: "We do not need an introduction to economics, sociology, or political science."¹² McGinley did, however, recognize the need for some bridge from liberal arts over to the political and social problems of the day. He argued that this could be achieved by one three-hour course in senior year which would explain the social sciences and the problems that they raise.

Jesuit social consciousness regarding racism developed slowly. A survey article by Father Donald Campion on "Negro Students in Jesuit Schools, 1950-1951" indicated that only one out of ninety students (1,192 of 100,000) was black. Jesuit high schools averaged only two or three black students; some colleges had none; the "best"

9 Robert C. Hartnett, S.J., "The J.E.A. and the I.S.O.," *JEQ*, June 1947, p. 26.

10 Robert C. Hartnett, S.J., "A Political Scientist Looks at Jesuit Law Schools," *JEQ*, March 1951, p. 216.

11 F. Christian Keeler, S.J., "Sociology in the High School," *JEQ*, March 1950.

12 James J. McGinley, S.J., "Place of Social Sciences in the Liberal Arts Curriculum," *JEQ*, June 1949, p. 24.

at admitting blacks were St. Louis University (362) and Loyola, Chicago (314).¹³ By way of comparison, our universities enrolled 8,540 black students in 1986.

Several factors contributed to the relative unconcern about justice and peace issues. Jesuit training did not include much in social sciences. Ethics tended to stress personal rather than social dimensions. But most importantly, Catholics still struggled to integrate themselves into the culture of the United States. We took pride in Catholic war heroes and in Catholic movie stars like Bing Crosby and Loretta Young. Catholic newspapers published all-Catholic baseball and football teams. Moreover, the spirit of the nation as a whole reflected great patriotism; significant levels of self-criticism would not appear until the 1960s. Thus while Ignatian spirituality certainly inspired some great Jesuit social apostles, we may have to concede that different levels of social consciousness simply reflect the culture of different eras.

As I read back over these reflections, I realize that I have fallen back into an all-too-familiar personal failing: focusing on faults. In my judgment we did overemphasize Latin and tradition; we did not treat theology seriously and creatively enough; we greatly neglected social sciences. On this last point I would still argue, as Father Hartnett did forty years ago, that Jesuits need more training in the social sciences, especially in economics, to deal more effectively with justice issues and in psychology to deal with pastoral problems. These comments, however, give no clue as to what I valued, valued so much that I chose the Jesuits over the diocesan clergy or some other religious order.

What I valued really had little to do with the curriculum. I valued rather my teachers, or more exactly how they taught. Father L. C. McHugh taught me both Latin and ethics. Had he taught me biology, what I gained would probably have been quite similar—a

13 Donald Campion, S.J., "Negro Students in Jesuit Schools 1950-1951," *JEQ*, March 1951.

sense of wonder and exploration in Virgil's *Aeneid*, a sense of human longing in Augustine's *Confessions*, a sense of measuring human actions by their final purpose in ethics. Father Daniel Power taught me to search for causes and context in studying history. What had been a boring memorization of dates in high school became my favorite study in college, and almost every philosophical or political issue I write on today includes some study of its historical context.

The most influential teacher in my life, Father Joseph Wulf-tange, taught me cosmology during my philosophy years at West Baden College. In terms of its content, scholastic cosmology proved quite useless. Wulf-tange taught me, however, how to study philosophy and how to study human problems in general: making certain the problem (the "state of the question") has been stated clearly, making certain the terms used are clearly defined, and weighing seriously and objectively opposing views to one's own. This last point influenced me especially. Too often, in those years of scholastic philosophy, "adversaries" were rejected with one- or two-line arguments. Wulf-tange insisted that one should not begin to criticize a position until one had understood it thoroughly and could explain it objectively. My own studies of Marxism and now of liberation theology owe much to the wisdom of his counsel.

Formation years: reaffirmation of vocation

Like most Jesuits I feel tempted to reminisce at length about the years of formation, but this would divert me from the purpose of this paper: to reflect on our educational *apostolate*. But a few reflections on these years of formation should suffice to show my own experience of Jesuit education and Jesuit spirituality interacting. Most Jesuits find their deepest spiritual roots in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. Thanks in great part to the power of my vocation experience—the experience of Christ through the love of another person—the novitiate long retreat hit me forcefully. The retreat, along with reading Alban Goodier's volumes on the life of Christ and the Christ-like manner of our novice master (Father

Bernie Wernert), gave me the most precious gift a Jesuit can receive: a love for the person of Jesus.

The juniorate included some struggling efforts to master Latin and Greek grammar, but a joyful introduction into creative writing. Moving on to West Baden, I thrived on philosophy, even though the “proofs” for the existence of God only led me to painful new doubts about God’s existence. The great weakness of scholastic philosophy, as I experienced it, came in part from the narrow scope of its methodology and categories (for example, matter-form), but more especially from the ancient or medieval time-framework of many issues it labored to resolve (for example, the principle of individuation, the nature of “ubi” or “where,” the problem of universals). Scholastic philosophy did, however, contain important values which reinforced Jesuit spirituality. St. Thomas Aquinas’s creative development of the *Summa*—from God and creation through human existence and human destiny fulfilled in God—spelled out in full the purpose of our lives which Ignatius set down in his Principle and Foundation. The great stress in scholastic philosophy on making “distinctions” served to aid Jesuits in Ignatian discernment. (After I had written my book on Marxism and Christianity, the Orbis publisher Philip Scharper paid me the compliment that touched me the most: “It is a true work of Ignatian discernment.”) Scholastic philosophy also gave us a “system” of thought which could be complemented or modified with insights from other philosophies. Changes, moreover, had begun: Father Bob Harvanek introduced me to the world of existentialism and later to an insightful triadic model of knowing.

From the classroom I remember little that dealt with social justice. But I had become aware of the problem of racism through some Sodality experiences at Georgetown and in doing a college term paper on slum housing in Baltimore. During regency I got the Sodality involved in work with the Catholic Interracial Council and made summer programs with Friendship House. In theology, one experience forcefully impressed on me the humiliating injustices that racial discrimination imposed on black people. I had invited a black

NAACP leader, a Fordham graduate, to speak to the Jesuits at West Baden. No hotel or motel in town would give him a room. We made an exception to the rules about no lay guests and put him up at the college. After ordination, working with seminarians in community organizing in Chicago would strengthen my awareness of racial injustices.

The years of theology (1959-1963) had their rewards, including an introduction to new trends in biblical exegesis. Along with many of my classmates, however, I found myself increasingly critical of much of the theology being offered and of Jesuit rules and regulations. A group of us studied Protestant theologians on our own. Cardinal Suhard's writings convinced me that theology ought to deal more with "this world." Rules that still called for exams in Latin, obligatory recreation periods each afternoon, and a strict 10:30 "bedtime" made little sense to me. We did a good bit of griping, enough to merit me a letter from my provincial admonishing me to work in tertianship on the "negative attitudes" I had developed.

Tertianship in Belgium renewed my great love of the Society. The long retreat, reading DeGuibert's classic on Jesuit spirituality, the freedom from legalism I found in Jesuit canon lawyers who addressed us, and the apostolic experience of working at a U.S. army base, all conspired to reaffirm my vocation as a Jesuit. During the succeeding years of doctoral studies in Paris, I came to a new appreciation of Jesuit "institutional apostolates" in the United States, as giving us far more leverage for influence than did the more individualistic apostolates of most Jesuits in Europe. After studies in Europe I came to North Aurora, Illinois, to teach Jesuit seminarians at the Bellarmine School of Theology. These were painful years (1967-1970) for the Society and for the Church in general. We lost so many outstanding people. My own tests, however, would come in succeeding years, after I moved on to the University of Detroit.

Years in Detroit: the experience of resurrection

Half of my life as a Jesuit has been spent at the University of Detroit. I have come to feel so committed to its work and its people that my own lowest ebbs and highest peaks have almost coincided with low and high moments in the university's recent history. Hence the autobiographical part of this section really focuses on what I perceived and experienced about the trials, tribulations, joys, and accomplishments of the university itself.

On the centenary of the University of Detroit, Father Herman Mueller published a history of the university. A wag in the Jesuit community observed that the history might be subtitled "1877 to 1977: The Crisis Years." The university has indeed suffered through many difficult periods, but it has especially experienced several dramatic traumas and transformations over the past twenty years.

I arrived on the scene in the fall of 1970, having spent the previous three years teaching philosophy to Jesuit scholastics at the Bellarmine School of Theology in North Aurora. What I remember most distinctly about that first semester was a series of articles, all unrelated but all making a similar ominous point. The *Detroit News* carried a feature article entitled: "Is Detroit a Dying City?" The school newspaper, the *Varsity News*, featured an article asking: "Is the University of Detroit a Dying Institution?" To add to this happy pair, the *National Catholic Reporter* published an essay: "Is Religious Life Dying?" Welcome to Detroit! I had barely reached my fortieth birthday and everything around me was allegedly dying.

The University of Detroit, if perhaps never ranked among the elite universities of the country, certainly enjoyed a solid reputation in the area. It could boast that its graduates included three former mayors, nearly half of the state's dentists, many prominent judges, and more executives at Ford Motor Company than from any other private university. Enrollment had peaked in 1951 at about 12,000 and it stood at 9,300 when I arrived. The Jesuit community had accepted into its midst the "Jesuit Collegiate Program," making it the

only program at that time which fully integrated the scholastics into the larger community.

In 1980, a decade later, the collegiate program was shifted to Loyola University in Chicago, enrollment in the university had dropped to 6,300, and some in the community felt it was futile even to recruit a new Jesuit president. 1980 was the lowest point in my life as a Jesuit, perhaps due most to the loss of the collegiate program. (I was superior for the collegians from 1972-1980, and also dean for five of those years.) I felt that without the collegiate program, and given conditions in the university, we would not attract new Jesuit faculty—new blood essential to any renewed hopes. Lay faculty felt increasingly distressed or angry at the university's decline. In the mid-1970s the dismissal of some forty faculty members, several of them tenured, led to the creation of a faculty union and left many faculty members bitterly alienated.

Many reasons have been given for the shape the university found itself in. The university dropped its core curriculum in 1969, when the dean of liberal arts argued that students would be more motivated if they could follow their own study interests. Following this, the admissions office launched a "Come as You Are" campaign, with an ad picturing a shoeless student, to attract students. Some critics blamed these "liberal" measures for creating an image of a university no longer offering a demanding, quality education.

One of the noblest ventures undertaken by the university seems also to have affected enrollment, especially from the ranks of its predominantly white clientele. In 1969, after the racial "uprising" that shattered Detroit, the university undertook a "Project 100" program, to enroll each year some one hundred black or other underprivileged students who did not qualify by normal admission standards. Many alumni who were part of the "white flight" after 1967 identified this new program as an abandonment of quality education.

The University of Detroit bears the city's name. It seems clear that the image of the city as dangerous, as the "murder capital of America," has affected enrollment more than any other factor. A

loyal alumnus whom I spoke to recently reflected the problem. He spoke highly of some recent changes at the university and said: "For the first time in years I have been considering encouraging one of my sons to attend U of D; of course I couldn't think of sending my daughter into that environment." In fact, however, the university has a remarkably good record of public safety compared with the so-called safe environments of the University of Michigan or Michigan State. But the "image" of the city itself remains a crippling factor.

Since 1980 some remarkable transformations, at least in spirit, have occurred. Finances remain a great and burdensome worry, though somehow the budget has been balanced each year. Enrollment has not increased, but it has essentially stabilized. But the spirit in the Jesuit community, and in some spheres of the university, has improved so dramatically that I have personally experienced it as a true "resurrection." The transformations, and some of their contributing causes, merit some reflection.

"Affirmation from without" created new hope in a variety of ways. The late Father Michael Walsh, former president of Fordham University and of Boston College, helped in an advisory capacity when we began a search for a new president. He was asked if the University of Detroit could be "saved" and whether he felt the effort was worth it. He replied yes to both and added: "I think the University of Detroit is *the* Jesuit university in the country." He quite obviously did not intend this remark as a comment on the achievements of U of D in comparison with other Jesuit schools. Rather he meant that its "mission," what it hoped to do with its integrated student body and its struggle to aid in the renaissance of a troubled city, made it a place where Jesuits should remain. That one comment gave us new heart. That Father Bob Mitchell would commit himself to becoming president gave us still further hope. His commitment and efforts as president have won for him the unwavering loyalty of all the Jesuits teaching here. "Affirmation from without" came also from the number, and especially the remarkable quality, of Jesuits who have joined the faculty in recent years. More than a

dozen Jesuits, including four from other provinces, have joined us in the past seven years. I could not conceive of a finer group of Jesuits to work with than these and the other Jesuits who have continued to remain at the University of Detroit.

"Affirmation from without" could also be said of the North Central Association committee which came to evaluate the university in 1985. The university committee which prepared for the visit faced up squarely to our problems and feared the North Central's evaluation. The North Central committee, however, not only called for a ten-year accreditation but stated that they could not believe, given the difficulties, the degree of dedication, loyalty, and energy they found in the faculty, administration, and supportive staff.

Visitors to the campus clearly sense the spirit that these affirmations have helped to produce. A very talented and successful Jesuit recently interviewed for a position at the university. When I spoke to him at the end of his first day of interviewing, he remarked: "I cannot believe this place; everyone is enthusiastic about the work of the university; I didn't even encounter people who were indifferent." (Admittedly we could have steered him in the direction of some who still retain quite negative views!)

I have called this essay a "personal witness." I cannot speak for the lay faculty and administration or even for other Jesuits. But I do want to witness personally to the joy and satisfaction of what I experience as a truly Jesuit apostolate. What changes have occurred to make my experience, and others', so different from the discouragement of years back? (Even then, however, I had a strong conviction that this is where I should be.) If I spoke earlier of affirmation from without, changes from within also played an important part in the "resurrection." When the collegiate program left the university in 1980, a large section of the Jesuit house was left vacant. Father Michael Lavelle, the Detroit provincial at that time, instructed the community to deliberate about how that part of the house might be used. More importantly, he urged us to decide what kind of community we wanted to be. In a somewhat controversial move, he also

determined that these deliberations should be carried out by those working directly at the university, since the future of the community depended upon the future of the university apostolate. Other members of the community could then choose whether they wanted to remain or opt out. All, in fact, stayed.

This process of community deliberation merits some comment, for it proved greatly significant in shaping new directions in the community. We began first with some general principles. Did we want to be a more "open" community, that is, more open to guests? Did we want to "pray" more together? Did we want to "share" more about our own work and the work of the university? We reached a yes consensus on these three general principles. We moved then to hammer out specifics, looking for solutions which would respect differing views. We would be open to guests at any meal; retreatants, family, and outside groups (both male and female) would be welcome to stay in the "old wing"; the recreation room, TV rooms, and haustus room would remain private. We would try to pray together more often—an ongoing problem to make this work successfully—but not make attendance obligatory. We would meet together for a weekend at the beginning of each academic year; we would meet monthly to discuss issues about our apostolate (for example, a series of meetings revolved around core curriculum). The annual meetings we continue to hold; monthly meetings worked for about four years and have since given way to occasional meetings only. All of these measures, in my estimation, have proved immensely fruitful in creating a positive apostolic spirit.

As I look now at the University of Detroit, we have a number of strengths on which to build. We have good faculty-student rapport and high-quality teaching. Our sense of Jesuit identity has greatly improved, due in part to the reestablishment of the core curriculum and even more to Jesuit efforts to be with students. We have an improved "Christian tone" on campus, due to the current director of Student Affairs, to an excellent campus ministry and team, and to a special group of students. Union-administration relations

are much better, thanks to willingness by the administration to "open its books," and willingness of union leaders to find constructive solutions to problems. We have an integrated, highly cosmopolitan student body, including about 25% blacks among our undergraduates (and 16% blacks overall) and students from over fifty foreign countries.

We also have some very notable weaknesses to confront. We have ongoing financial troubles which constrain us from dealing effectively with problems in different areas: for example, outdated equipment, buildings in need of repairs, low faculty salaries, and understaffed offices. Other areas that call for attention include: insufficient research efforts and programs that deal with the problems of the city of Detroit; insufficient attention to foreign students; too few black faculty; too few courses dealing with peace and justice issues; the need for stronger Jesuit-lay faculty relations.

I feel, however, that our strengths now outweigh our weaknesses. For me, these recent years have truly resulted in a resurrection of spirit. I feel this especially in the strength, quality, and solidarity of the Jesuits at the university. I believe that as a community we have made a decision "to choose life." Many factors, some already noted, contributed to this newness of spirit.

Some argue that hardship itself provides greater solidarity and dedicated effort. Certainly the "people" factor stands out most distinctly in a number of transformations in the Jesuit community and in the university as a whole. We have been extraordinarily blessed with a president, Father Bob Mitchell, and two rectors, Father Ed Miller and Father Norm McKendrick, who have had nearly 100% backing from the community. Some tremendously dedicated and creative faculty and administration personnel have contributed immensely. The work of one associate dean in developing a strong advising and retention program may be most responsible for stability in enrollment.

Most interesting to observe in this regard has been a "ripple" effect that I have personally experienced in various ways. We could

not have developed this new spirit without the influx of new Jesuits. Some of us have helped in recruiting these new Jesuits; they in turn have been influential in recruiting others. I feel that I know more students and am closer to more students now than ever before. This has not come, however, from specific new efforts on my part but rather from the contacts of other Jesuits who draw students to liturgies, to meetings, and to other affairs that I might attend.

One scholarship program, initiated several years ago, illustrates dramatically the ripple effect that important decisions can have. The president's cabinet raised sufficient money to award to outstanding students ten "Insignis" scholarships each year; in addition, all who qualify as candidates (an average of about one hundred per year) automatically win half-scholarships. The risk in this venture was clear: if all these students would have come anyway and paid their own way, the school would be losing considerable revenue. But the Insignis program paid off in a number of ways, many that could not have been calculated. The scholarships increased enrollment, enabling the university to stabilize overall enrollment figures. The academic level of undergraduate programs rose; the honors program prospered. A second decision, regarding the type of students to be chosen, affected the whole tenor of campus life. Leadership qualities would be given more emphasis than pure academic records. As a consequence, in recent years, student initiative improved dramatically. Scholarship winners predominate in campus service activities: "phonathons" to recruit new students, leaders in the campus-ministry retreats, attendance at daily liturgies, promoters of Hunger Week, applicants to the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, setting a new "Christian tone" on campus. Besides having special leadership qualities, these students also are freer of financial worries and hence can give time to campus activities while other students—the majority of our students—must work part-time to make ends meet. A year ago two daughters of University of Detroit faculty members applied for Insignis scholarships. Both did so only to satisfy their parents; one stated that "no way" was she coming here. Both decided to come, won

over by the contagious enthusiasm of the students they met.

I find myself, then, not only deeply committed to the University of Detroit, but convinced that it represents what a Jesuit apostolate in higher education should be. It is "mission territory"; we still may not make it financially. It serves, if not the poor, a significant black and ethnic population. By its very presence in the city, it witnesses to a commitment to a struggling urban area. It gives me a deep sense of participating in a Jesuit *corporate* apostolate; fellow Jesuits have enhanced my effectiveness with students, stimulated me to more professional research and writing, inspired me, helped me to grow spiritually, and offered me friendship. Because we have had to struggle, and because of our relatively small numbers, I feel very much needed. There was a time, several years ago, when I wondered if I had wasted my efforts by remaining at University of Detroit. Whether the university wins or loses in the future in its struggle to survive, I feel the effort has been a truly Jesuit work and I am grateful for being part of it.

I am not sure how much of the University of Detroit experience, or my own earlier experiences of Jesuit education, one can extrapolate and make applicable to other Jesuit institutional apostolates. In the second part of the paper, however, I want to draw on these experiences to discuss some points that appear important for all of our educational apostolates.

PART II: BUILDING TOWARD THE FUTURE

Our schools already depend heavily on lay faculty and staff. Father Kولvenbach has called upon us to work on Jesuit-lay collaboration. In the past, collaboration often meant that we controlled and the lay faculty and staff collaborated. As we move to the future, collaboration must become a truly "shared vision." In time we Jesuits may find that "we" must share in "their" lay apostolate. Our own enthusiasm about the future may depend on how much we feel that the

schools we now call Jesuit still retain their Jesuit identity. While many lay faculty and staff may care little about Jesuit ideals, many others do identify strongly with Jesuit education, and still more will want the university or high school to retain at least its identity as a "Jesuit" school. I am told that Haverford College has successfully retained its Quaker identity without any significant presence of Quakers. We may need to hope for and work for that kind of continuation ourselves.

An essential part of this process, in my judgment, involves a discussion of what we mean by Jesuit education. But to establish Jesuit identity we need also to link our work in education with the Ignatian spirituality that inspired it. In March 1987 an international commission on Jesuit education published an important booklet entitled *The Characteristics of Jesuit Education*.¹⁴ The document emerged as the product of several years of study and dialogue. It contains some twenty-eight characteristics of Jesuit education, each linked to a point in Ignatian spirituality. I found the document rewarding and challenging. I found myself, however, wanting to reshape it to bear on Jesuit higher education but also to simplify the list of characteristics and to give a more unified view of Ignatian spirituality for possible use in dealing with lay colleagues.

My interest in wanting to define Jesuit education comes out of my experience over the past several years in developing a core curriculum for the University of Detroit. We had dropped the core in 1969; the board of trustees wanted a new core established, a core that would stress basic skills and "Jesuit identity"; the board also wanted the core in place within the year (1982). As chairperson of the curriculum committee, I drew up what I perceived as significant characteristics of Jesuit education, and the Jesuit community discussed these and modified them. The university committee then developed a core with six objectives based on these characteristics.

¹⁴ *The Characteristics of Jesuit Education*, by the International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education (Washington, D.C.: Jesuit Secondary Education Association, 1987).

This effort awakened my interest in defining Jesuit education; work on Jesuit-lay collaboration has reinforced the need.

The description which follows addresses primarily Jesuit college education. It looks first at the Ignatian spirituality that inspires Jesuit education and then states the leading "characteristics" of Jesuit education. I have borrowed often from the Jesuit Secondary Education Association document, from the *Constitutions* of the Society, from studies by Father George Ganss, and from an essay by Father Brian Daley. In defining characteristics I used as a base a list formulated by Father Raymond Schroth in an article for *Commonweal*.¹⁵ I have not attempted to throw "new light" on Jesuit education through extensive historical research; I want simply to present a view of Jesuit education which might be discussed, criticized, and amended for possible use in mainstreaming Jesuit identity in the Jesuit schools of tomorrow.

The Ignatian vision: the inspiration for Jesuit education

Unlike some other religious orders, the Society of Jesus did not set education as its foundational mission. But within Ignatius's own lifetime the work of education had become a principal apostolate. Ignatius viewed education as an important instrument in the larger mission of the Society. He wrote in our *Constitutions*: "The aim which the Society of Jesus directly seeks is to aid its own members and fellowmen to attain the ultimate end for which they were created."¹⁶ To fulfill this aim, Ignatius continued, "learning and a method of expounding it are also necessary," and hence the Society should take charge of some colleges and universities.¹⁷

15 Raymond A. Schroth, S.J., "Tough Choices on Campus," *Commonweal*, March 28, 1986, p. 171. See Brian E. Daley, S.J., "'Splendor and Wonder': Ignatian Mysticism and the Ideals of Liberal Education"; talk given at Georgetown University.

16 Ignatius Loyola, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*, translated with an introduction and commentary by George E. Ganss, S.J. (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1970). From the Preamble to Part IV of the *Constitutions*, [307].

17 Ibid.

St. Ignatius viewed education as an *instrument* to achieve the religious goals of giving glory and service to God. This priority, noted in a study by Father Robert Newton,¹⁸ is stated even more forcefully by Father John Donohue reflecting on Ignatius's own educational experiences:

It was not love of learning for its own sake that inspired him but an implacable and practical devotion to a purpose which he might serve. This is the Ignatian viewpoint in which the finality of education is directly governed by a Christian concept of the finality of life itself and schooling is made to minister to the over-arching aim of love of God and love of mankind for the sake of God.¹⁹

The Ignatian vision, expressed in the Constitutions and applied to education, came originally from Ignatius's own spiritual experiences, experiences embodied in the *Spiritual Exercises*. The *Exercises* influenced the original educational objectives of the Society; they continue to shape and inspire Jesuits in every generation. I have selected three important parts of the *Exercises* which I would use, in presentations to lay colleagues, to show the links between Ignatian spirituality and Jesuit education.

First Principle and Foundation: fulfilling one's purpose in life

At the outset of the *Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatius set down a “Principle and Foundation” which expressed his overarching Christian worldview. We were created “to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord” and by this means to save our souls. The other things on the face of the earth are created for us, to help us in attaining the end for which we were created. “Our one desire and

¹⁸ Robert R. Newton, *Reflections on the Educational Principles of the Spiritual Exercises* (Washington D.C.: Jesuit Secondary Education Association, 1977), p. 4.

¹⁹ Donohue, *Jesuit Education*, p. 13.

choice should be what is more conducive to the end for which we are created."

This stress on fulfilling one's purpose in life became central to the very definition of the Jesuit mission stated earlier, to aid others in attaining the ultimate end for which they were created. Not surprisingly, then, this aim governed the goals and practices of Jesuit education.

"Since the end of the learning which is acquired in this Society is with God's favor to help the souls of its own members and those of their fellowmen, it is by this norm that the decision will be made, both in general and in the case of individual persons, as to what branches ours ought to learn and how far they ought to advance in them."²⁰ Ignatius sought the best teaching methods of the day and the disciplines then considered most important to achieving one's purpose in life. He specified as important disciplines to study: humane letters in different languages, and this included the study of grammar and rhetoric; Aristotelean logic, physics, metaphysics, and ethics; and the study of Scripture and theology.²¹ A good preparation in Latin was essential to all of this.²² The best teaching methods of the day—disputations, defending and questioning theses, prelections and repetitions—were adopted.²³ Spiritual and moral formation of students also received emphasis so that students "acquired along with their letters the habits worthy of a Christian."²⁴

These initial recommendations, enhanced by the experiences of the next several decades, became codified in the *Ratio Studiorum*. The *Ratio* set guidelines for centuries to follow. Even to this day the stresses in Jesuit education on humanistic studies, on philosophy

20 Ignatius Loyola, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*, [351].

21 Ibid.

22 Ibid.

23 Ibid.

24 Ibid.

and theology, on logical thinking and effective communication, and on self-appropriation in learning versus indoctrination, all reflect this original heritage. Most importantly, all of these find their unity in the purpose of life itself as set down in Ignatius's First Principle and Foundation.

Building on this foundation in the First Week of the Exercises, St. Ignatius seeks to inspire wonder and praise in the retreatant for God's goodness and mercy. This sense of wonder for all that God has created and done, a search to "find God in all things," inspired Jesuit education as well. It is world-affirming. It encourages appreciation for the best in the past and a sense that something of God can be found in every culture and creation. Ignatius also recognized, however, the power of sin in the world. We only come truly to appreciate God's goodness when we realize we are loved by him in spite of our sinfulness. Confronting sin admittedly does not appear a likely educational objective. But it does underlie the long-standing Jesuit stress on moral formation, both in the formal study of ethics and in concern for character development. In recent years, a sense of "social sin" (for example, racial or sexual discrimination, or unethical business practices) underlies the contemporary stress in Jesuit education on confronting injustice.

The call of Christ the King: serving others

In the Ignatian vision all humans are called to eternal life with God. But fulfilling one's vocation implies far more than concern for my own personal salvation. We are called to *serve* God and others. In the *Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatius prefacing his first meditations on the person of Jesus with a call from Jesus to work with him to save the human race. This call is meant to inspire us to transcend self-interest, to work not only for what is good but for "the greater glory of God"—the *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam* familiar to generations of Jesuit students. In his 1973 "Men for Others" address to Jesuit alumni, Father Pedro Arrupe stated this goal in contemporary terms of education for justice. "Today our prime educational objective must

be to form men-for-others; men who will live not for themselves but for God and his Christ . . . who cannot even conceive of love of God which does not include love for the least of their neighbors.”²⁵

Most students come to us with very pragmatic goals in mind. They want a solid education which will prepare them for successful careers. We have to acknowledge such goals and help students to fulfill them. But the Society of Jesus would hardly have undertaken the apostolate of education simply to enable students to achieve “worldly goals.” We have always sought to imbue students with a faith life and values that transcend goals of money and success. We want graduates who will be leaders in society. In the past, Jesuit educators sought to prepare graduates for professional life, believing that doctors, lawyers, and business people who developed personal standards of ethical integrity and concern for others would influence society.²⁶ Given the loss of ethical integrity in many areas of contemporary business and government, such personal standards remain quite important today. Yet we strive for more. We would like to send forth graduates concerned about the society and world in which they live, desirous of eliminating hunger and conflict in the world, seeking to end racial and sexual discrimination, and wanting to share their faith with others. We want more students imbued with the generosity that leads some of our graduates into the Jesuit Volunteer Corps and into more long-range service vocations.

On our part, an education which leads in these directions will include specific attention to courses in ethics and theology and courses which challenge students to confront contemporary social issues.

25 Pedro Arrupe, S.J., “Men for Others” (Washington, D.C.: The Jesuit Secondary Education Association, March 1974).

26 For example, Donohue, *Jesuit Education*, states the goal of serving society in these terms: “What is called for now, as always, is the education of every Christian student to an ardent sense of responsibility for the welfare of the many communities in which he is destined to play various roles,” and he mentions the family, one’s vocational group, political society, and the Church (p. 208).

It will also involve personal contact with students and the encouraging of lay faculty who share these values.

Discernment: finding God

In the Two Standards, in the Election, in the Contemplatio, and throughout the *Spiritual Exercises*, St. Ignatius speaks about “discerning spirits,” “finding God’s will,” and “finding God in all things.” If the general plan of God’s creation is clear—that we are made to serve God and find happiness with him in heaven—the right decisions to make about our lives, and the right actions to take to better society, do not always appear so clearly. The director of a retreat plays an important role in helping the retreatant to “discern” what is from God and what is not, what is good and what has only the appearance of good.

In Jesuit education, the very search for truth itself is a process of discernment: being open to new ideas, new discoveries, and new cultures, but then judging them as objectively as possible. The discoveries and discernment help the student also to become more free. An ultimate goal of counseling students, academically and personally, should be to help them to learn to discern for themselves about important decisions in life.

The importance of discernment, I believe, is reflected in the amount of emphasis placed on “critical thinking” in Jesuit education. While Jesuit education strives to include creativity and affectivity—reflecting the use of the imagination, the senses, and affectivity in the Exercises—it has often placed greater stress on clear, logical, and balanced reasoning. In eras in which scholastic philosophy prevailed, Jesuits were known for making “distinctions”—looking at problems from various perspectives and reconciling partial truths in different positions. We need to inculcate this same type of careful, critical thinking to prepare students to face the many difficult decisions they face in their own personal lives and in seeking the best for society.

Critical reasoning alone, however, means little if it does not also reflect Christian values. We may not make explicit reference to the

Two Standards of St. Ignatius, but many aspects of contemporary culture run clearly counter to the values we proclaim by our faith. We live in an increasingly hedonistic culture. We are bombarded with advertising that plays up sexual innuendo, "being with it" in taste and style, and finding quick gratification of needs. The breakdown of ethics in business and government has been noted repeatedly even by periodicals which serve the business community (for example, *Business Week, U.S. News & World Report*). The U.S. Catholic bishops have drawn attention to the danger of nuclear war, the problems of unemployment and poverty in our own country, and unfair trade relations in respect to other countries. We may be reluctant to speak as Ignatius did of the "standard of Satan," but we need certainly to offer an education that challenges much that contemporary society presents as values.

Distinctive characteristics of Jesuit education

I have already noted many characteristics of Jesuit education in discussing how the Ignatian vision translates into educational goals. In this section I highlight what I would present to others as the most "distinctive" characteristics of Jesuit education. The immediately previous section of this essay, on the Ignatian vision, may be useful for Jesuits or as reading material for lay colleagues, but I believe we also need a short and simple list of characteristics for broader use among students, parents, and faculty. If one were to list all the objectives of Jesuit education, the list would be endless. Jesuit education includes goals toward which every college and university should aim, for example, to produce graduates who are competent in their field. Distinctive, moreover, does not mean unique, something to be found only in Jesuit schools. Distinctive does, however, signify those characteristics *most often stressed* in Jesuit education.

In establishing curricula at Jesuit colleges and universities, Jesuits tended to stress those subjects (philosophy, theology, humanities) and those skills (logical reasoning, speech) which most reflected their own formation as Jesuits. Thus distinctive characteristics of Jesuit

education derive, to a great extent, from the educational training of Jesuits themselves. I would propose the following as distinctive characteristics of Jesuit education.

1. A pervading philosophy

The *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius inspired, and still inspire, the ultimate goal of Jesuit education—to help students to find God in all things, to achieve their purpose in life, to serve others, to be open to all worthwhile studies, to learn to discern with wisdom what is good or not good for oneself and society. Philosophy and religious studies have held a privileged position in the curriculum because they are intended to provide students with an opportunity to reflect on their life goals and values.

2. A personal concern for the whole life of each student

Jesuit education looks not only to the intellectual formation of students but also to their spiritual, moral, and psychological development. Personal concern for students manifests itself in a variety of ways: in academic work, by encouraging self-activity, initiative, self-discovery, and the development of individual talents; outside of the classroom, by showing personal interest, being available for counseling, and providing opportunities for their spiritual development, for example, through liturgies, faith-sharing groups, volunteer social work, and retreats.

Later in this essay I shall also address the importance of creating a spirit of “community” within the university, as essential not only for the students’ development but also for the spirit of the university as a whole. This second characteristic raises a practical issue as well: Should not “service,” in addition to the research and teaching stressed in other schools, play a more important role in promotion and tenure decisions at Jesuit institutions?

3. A striving for excellence

The renowned educator and humanist Gilbert Highet considered striving for excellence as one of the three distinctive traits of Jesuit teaching, along with planning and adaptation to individual students. In the beginnings of Jesuit education, says Highet, Jesuits recognized that the Counter-Reformation called for Catholics who were not only devout but brilliant. Hence Jesuits insisted on teaching the most exacting and rewarding subjects superlatively well.²⁷ Today leaders must be competent in their fields, able to analyze and resolve problems, and able to communicate effectively.

4. An emphasis on critical thinking and effective communication

Jesuit education includes the creative use of the imagination and attention to emotions. But of the many skills which education seeks to develop, Jesuit education places special emphasis on clear, logical reasoning and on good communication skills, particularly speech. The emphasis on speech (*eloquentia perfecta*) may also explain why theater usually stands out among the arts taught at Jesuit schools. The emphasis on critical thinking applies to the way in which values are communicated—not through indoctrination but by challenging students to express and carefully assess positions. It also influences the way in which society and culture are studied.

5. Development of a broad liberal education

Jesuit education is world-affirming; it encourages a study of all reality. It strives to dialogue with all aspects of culture, to integrate faith and reason, and to prepare students “for life.” It seeks to produce wisdom, not marketability. Narrow specialization or concentration only on career training runs counter to this objective. Jesuit education has long stressed the humanities because they teach us about our past and show what humans throughout the ages have

²⁷ Gilbert Highet, “The Art of Teaching: Jesuits as Teachers,” *JEQ*, March 1951, p. 209.

found to be most valuable.²⁸ But Jesuit education also involves a bold engagement in the world, an exploring of new ideologies, new technologies, and new aspirations.

6. A commitment to a “faith that does justice”

The Jesuits founded educational institutions to help students fulfill their own purpose in life, but even more especially to imbue students with a desire, and the requisite preparation, to serve God in the world. In recent years, special emphasis has been placed on working for justice and peace in the world. Jesuit education has always looked to the formation of potential leaders in society, of graduates who ideally would live out the Ignatian vision. In decades past when Catholics in the United States played a less influential role, Jesuit schools sought to prepare professionals to take their place in society and to influence it by the witness of their faith and integrity. In recent years Jesuit education has sought to promote, more explicitly and directly, the work of addressing problems of injustice and violence. This concern flows from Christian faith, from a following of Jesus who identified with the poor, who rejected violence, and who preached that the “kingdom of God,” a kingdom of peace and justice, was at hand.

These descriptions of the links between Ignatian spirituality and Jesuit education, and the list of characteristics of Jesuit education, represent only my view of both. I have tried, however, to create a synthesis based not only on my own experiences, but on various other articulations of Jesuit principles of education.²⁹ I would hope that

28 See Brian E. Daley, S.J., on Jesuit liberal education, in “Splendor and Wonder.”

29 For comparison with other lists of characteristics or principles of Jesuit education see: Ganss, *St. Ignatius' Idea*, pp 185-199; he gives fifteen principles; Ganss, *The Jesuit Educational Tradition and St. Louis University* (St. Louis University Press, 1969), pp. 19-23, where he reduces the principles to eleven; a 1932 *Instructio* prepared by a Commission on Higher Education of the American Assistancy, quoted by Matthew J. Fitzsimmons, S.J., “The Instructio: 1934-1949,” in the *Jesuit Educational Quarterly*, October 1949, pp. 73-74, lists three principal characteristics, but the third is subdivided into five parts dealing principally with methods; the JSEA, *The Characteristics of Jesuit*

these descriptions might stimulate other Jesuits to comment on, criticize, and amend them. While recognizing the great diversity of our schools—the descriptions do not even address the problem of applying Jesuit objectives to graduate schools—I would hope that some consensus statement might eventually develop to aid us in speaking to lay colleagues about Jesuit identity.

We could also find useful a single sentence or paragraph that articulated the objectives of Jesuit education. As a primer toward this end, Father Ganss offers a concise statement of Ignatius's own view of education:

The result which Ignatius aimed to produce in the students was manifestly a carefully reasoned, and therefore scientifically grounded, Catholic outlook on life which would enable and inspire them to contribute intelligently and effectively to the welfare of society.³⁰

Spiritual and apostolic priorities

We return to the problem we raised at the beginning of this essay. How can we as Jesuits “choose life” so that our work may be energized to promote the work of Christ at present and into the future? We face not only the prospect of diminishing numbers but also the limits of our own spiritual energies. When I reflect back on the experiences related in the first part of this essay, one important energizing principle stands out: I was most fruitful and the work of the Society seemed most fruitful when the sense of “corporate” apostolate appeared strongest. The sense of corporate bonding, moreover, has its roots in the very foundation of the Society. When the first followers of St. Ignatius gathered in 1539 to determine

Education, gives twenty-eight characteristics; Newton, *Reflections*, gives ten characteristics dealing chiefly with methods of teaching; Schroth, “Tough Choices on Campus,” gives six characteristics; I took some of those I listed directly from him.

30 Ganss, *St. Ignatius' Idea*, p. 54

whether they should seek formal incorporation as a religious community, their experiences of fruitfulness in sharing common bonds proved decisive. "In the end, we came to the conclusion that, as the most merciful and loving Lord had deigned to bring us together and bind us to one another, feeble men of such diverse nationality and character, we ought not to destroy this union of God but rather daily to strengthen and confirm it, making ourselves one body in which each took thought and care for the others, for the greater fruit of souls . . ."³¹ Many Jesuits, like St. Francis Xavier, would work alone, but even this work, as Xavier's letters make clear, drew strength from the common bond formed in the Company of Jesus. This sense of a common bond drew me to the Society, and a new-found sense of "apostolic community" appears most responsible for the new spirit I experienced at the University of Detroit.

I am not sure how much can be extrapolated from my own personal experiences at U of D and presented as goals for all Jesuit institutions. Each institution has its own unique charisms, strengths, and weaknesses. The relatively small number of Jesuits working at the University of Detroit, twenty to twenty-five, makes meeting together fruitful but may not work for larger groups. But whatever the process, it strikes me as essential that Jesuits need to support each other and to plan together for the future—a future in which the laity will play an increasingly dominant role. We need to build a stronger sense of Jesuit apostolic community and then help to foster a spirit of community in the institutions we serve.

Building community

In decades past, both Jesuit community life and the university apostolate had clear structures which provided direction. In recent years we have had to create new patterns to achieve the same goals. In communities the "daily order" once provided certain fixed community exercises. Like other Jesuit communities, we in Detroit have

31 James Brodrick, S.J., *The Origin of the Jesuits* (London: Longmans, 1949), p. 70.

met with mixed results from different efforts at forming community. We continue to try, with limited success, new approaches at making communal prayer more effective. Certain community social events have achieved some degree of success: Friday-night gatherings and video-movies, monthly birthday celebrations. The weekend away in September, for those working at the university, begins with individual reports on our current work (publications, teaching, and so forth) and then moves on to shared concerns and planning. These annual meetings have been, in my judgment, highly successful. Monthly meetings proved successful when the matters under discussion were judged urgent and important; they bogged down when issues became more routine. For the past five years, a small group of us have met faithfully every Tuesday night to share the highpoints and lowpoints of our life and work. This sharing I have found immensely supportive—but only one small group profited. In 1986-1987 other groups formed to share the fruits of a nineteenth-annotation retreat. This proved successful for many and led this past year to the formation of a second weekly “story-telling” group.

The decision several years ago to become a more “open” community has enhanced our own community spirit and at the same time has helped in extending this spirit to the university as a whole. (Again these are *my* perceptions.) Campus liturgies have also helped in developing community. Some Jesuits have excellent peer relations with their lay colleagues, though in general we seem to relate better with students. But if the future really depends, as I believe it does, on the laity carrying forth Jesuit goals and ideals, work on Jesuit-lay collaboration, especially with our colleagues in faculty and administration, must become an important priority.

In the March 1987 issue of *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*, J. A. Appleyard offered some stimulating reflections on “The Languages We Use: Talking About Religious Experience.”³² He com-

32 J. A. Appleyard, S.J., “The Languages We Use: Talking About Religious Experience,” in *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*, 19/2, March 1987.

mented on informal meetings involving Jesuits at Boston College with many of their lay faculty and staff. At the meetings the lay faculty were encouraged to speak about their experiences at Boston College rather than to address "Jesuit education" directly. Appleyard concluded with some insightful comments on process and community which confirmed my own convictions.

In approaching lay-Jesuit collaboration at the University of Detroit, we resisted an initial temptation to bring in speakers to talk about Jesuit education. Instead we followed the suggestion of one of the non-Jesuit committee members to give *them* an opportunity to speak first of their vision, their commitment, and their work. We structured the first meetings by colleges, beginning with the smaller and more professional schools (architecture, law, dentistry). Their deans and other spokespersons for the schools would explain briefly how they saw their school as Jesuit in character, and one of the Jesuits would talk about distinctive characteristics of Jesuit education. Discussion and social interaction followed. In February 1988, a weekend workshop with representatives of different colleges explored directions that collaboration should take in the future.

These steps, however, mark only a beginning. Even the spirit within our own Jesuit community at the University of Detroit remains precarious and could easily slip without strong renewal efforts. We still have "miles to go" before we begin to achieve any shared vision and spirit in the university as a whole. I would hope that someone in the Assistancy might treat in far greater detail what has occurred in other schools and what still needs to be attempted. Certainly the future of Jesuit education cannot simply depend on numerically strong Jesuit presence, and even less on Jesuit "control."

Intellectual engagement

If we work in an educational apostolate, then educating must indeed be the principal focus of our efforts. The building of community, while a value in itself, looks primarily to creating a climate where good education and formation can best develop. The tradi-

tional objectives of Jesuit education remain important; to open students' minds to new worlds of knowledge, to help students to reflect on the purpose of their lives, to transmit to them values about loving God and respecting the dignity of others, and to challenge them to work for a just and peaceful world. We need a spirituality which inspires us in the ordinary work of teaching and administration. Love of teaching comes so easily and spontaneously for me that I have never felt the need to discover some special spiritual motivation. On the other hand, taking time for others, dealing with the pressures of too much to do, casting off depression or anger when things go wrong in the university, being worn down by meetings—these do require prayerful attentiveness to needed graces of love, trust, and hope.

Besides the daily efforts that go into teaching, we Jesuits have a special and important service to give to the Church, a service many already count on us to give. We need to lead in efforts to probe the riches of our faith, but also to engage in dialogue with the world. Catholic faith is profoundly incarnational; it finds God in all things. Just as Jesuits in centuries back went out as missionaries "to conquer the whole world for Christ," we must seek to explore intellectually all that needs redemption in Christ. One of the most gratifying aspects of being at U of D has been that even with a relatively small group of Jesuit teachers we have men working and writing in richly diverse fields: in consumer marketing research, labor relations, the history of technology, religious cults, genetics, mechanical engineering, business ethics, law, agriculture in developing nations, as well as in theology and various other disciplines. We need to continue to nourish an incarnational, Ignatian spirituality which inspires us to bring a faith perspective to all these worlds of discourse, and to offer the fruits of these dialogues for the work of the Church.

Finally we are called to a "faith that does justice." I have kept this under the heading of intellectual engagement. I have tried personally to give some regular time to work with groups concerned with Central America and with world hunger, but even on social

issues those engaged in teaching will likely make their best contribution through consciousness-raising based on careful analysis. After struggling to find a “spirituality” of justice, guilt proved exhausting and nonproductive, compassion and hope too generic. I found an answer while reading Jon Sobrino’s *Christology at the Crossroads*.³³ We are committed to Christ; the very heart of our faith lies in commitment to the person of Jesus Christ. But to be committed to him means devoting oneself to the mission he initiated. That mission, in turn, involves defending the poor and working to realize God’s plan for the world: to make the kingdom of God a reality, a kingdom of peace and justice in which love, reconciliation, and respect for the dignity of all would prevail. My very commitment to Christ, then, calls forth from me a commitment to the poor and to working to achieve what God wants for his world.

CONCLUSION

To prepare for the future, I believe that we need to take the best from our past, gain a strong sense of our own Jesuit identity and objectives, and then develop a spirituality that stresses both building community and engagement in the world. The influence of the first Jesuits, like that of the first Christians, did not depend on numbers or power but on vitality and zeal. We must indeed “choose life” so that we and our apostolates may live.

33 Jon Sobrino, S.J., *Christology at the Crossroads*, trans. John Drury (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1978), chapter 4, on the faith of Jesus. See also Sobrino, *The True Church and the Poor*, trans. Matthew J. O’Connell (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1984), chapter 3, on “Faith and the Promotion of Justice.”

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Editor:

After delaying for some months I finally read Roger Haight's recent work for the Assistancy Seminar, *Foundational Issues in Jesuit Spirituality*. I found it quite clearly written and cogently argued. But I was somewhat unsettled about the very strong emphasis on *praxis* over contemplation in Jesuit spirituality. Likewise, I feel that in prayer it is possible to get more direction from God (specifically, the Holy Spirit) for specific decisions than the author seems to allow in his paper. The "general will of God" is too general for my own experience of the discernmemnt of spirits even though I agree with Haight that the decision in each case is ultimately my own, not God's.

All these reflections stirred me to think about writing up a process-oriented understanding of Jesuit spirituality. The Whiteheadian doctrine of divine initial aims and creaturely subjective aims which somehow mesh to produce the self-constituting "decision" of a given "actual occasion" certainly provides the theoretical framework for an analysis of "action" along the lines of Haight's work, but likewise allows (at least, in principle) for an experience of God at every moment to the individual whose spiritual sensibilities have been sharpened by habitual prayer.

Joseph A. Bracken, S.J.
Xavier University
Cincinnati, Ohio

Editor:

Your issue on *How We Live Where We Live* is now on my bookshelf as I have just completed reading it. Having lived my scholastic years in both Saint Louis University (Philosophy 1939-1941) and in Woodstock College (Theology 1944-1948) long before Vatican II, I could appreciate each and every detail of "A Large Community: 1963-1964"; and having spent most of my priestly years in the conduct of retreats and retreat houses I could readily appreciate "The Small Community: 1978-1979."

With approximately twenty years of retreat-house living (among other places at Monroe, N.Y.) and another five of small parish community life in Salisbury, Rhodesia, I have had more than my share of small Jesuit communities with all their advantages and disadvantages. The usual course of studies at Saint Andrew on Hudson, Saint Louis University and Woodstock in Maryland, took the rough edges off as only a large community can do. But neither large or small community prepared me for the "ex lex" life of no community at all other than that of fifty volunteer workers as was the case of my living in Monroe for eighteen months, not to mention an additional thirteen summers, or living with two hundred and some recovering

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

drug addicts as is the case at present here in Daytop where I serve as chaplain.

While there neither is nor has been any religious community in so much of my adult life, I have not the least fault to find with the preparation I have received for what has proven to be in large part eremitic or even troglodytic living. More basic than the circumstances of one's living, his housing, food or how he acquires his clothing, is, I believe, the work he can and must do for our Lord and His Kingdom.

John W. Magan, S.J.
Daytop Village
Swan Lake, N.Y.

Editor:

The issue of *Studies, How We Live Where We Live*, serves as documentation of our community life as well as good information for those of us too young to have experienced some of its earlier aspects.

Most of our communities are homes for Jesuits from the ages of 25-85. For those of us used to community sharing and informal family-style living, it is sometimes difficult to imagine the changes required of Jesuits who are not familiar with those ways in a Jesuit community.

We have placed a huge burden on the folks who began formation in a completely different style. The first step in assisting those Jesuits might be understanding the changes involved. Your article helped me understand more of Jesuit life in the sixties, and some of the selfless changes our elder Jesuits have gone through.

You raised a good question about small communities: in this style of community, how do we communicate "news of the past and of the ongoing life and activities of the Society. . . ."? We turn more and more to small communities because of the interpersonal advantages, but what kind of information network are we developing to share each others' lives, our Jesuit history in the making, and future plans?

The growing number of smaller communities raises another question in my mind. Each community needs someone to make that final decision about certain aspects of our lives. We are going to have a growing number of superiors and ministers, perhaps taking away from some of our apostolic effectiveness. How do we keep administrative burdens from multiplying while retaining access to the superior?

I believe that small communities offer much to us as Jesuits. As we take advantage of the benefits of that type of life, we need to address the weaknesses that such changes bring.

Kevin J. Zenner, S.J.
Santiago, Chile

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